



Embrace!

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Special points of interest:

- COW roams the halls
- Relaxing the atmosphere
- When is home really a home?
- Time to play!

Embrace! is a project of the N.C. Coalition for Long-Term Care Enhancement. To respond to articles, contact the editor: Jill Nothstine, Shoreline Healthcare Management LTC, (352) 250-7687 or at j.nothstine@shorelinehcm.com.

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WHO DOESN'T LIKE TO PLAY?

By David King

From the young to the young at heart, all of us on some occasion want to let our hair down and enjoy a few minutes of fun and laughter. I, myself, can't walk by a swing set without stopping, taking a look, and wondering just how high I could get it to go. Then, I look around to see who's watching, and I wonder if they, too, would like to come out and play. Who doesn't like to play?

Many memories flood my mind as I think of Sunday afternoons at my grandmother's house. Everybody, at some point during the day, would stop in to say hello, catch up on things, and watch the kids play. That is why, when given the opportunity to be involved in developing a family playground area at our facility, the Lutheran Home - Hickory, I jumped at the opportunity. I know what those memories mean to me, and how much fun it would be to make those type memories possible for other families.

Our playground was made possible through a grant from The North Carolina Coalition for Long-Term Care Enhancement, Grover Herman Trust, and a donation from Thrivent Financial for Lutherans. In addition to this, we benefited from many volunteer hours of labor by organizations like the Catawba County Agriculture Extension Service's Master Gardener Program, youth groups from several area churches, and guidance from our own Resident Council. Through the collaboration of all these groups, we have a wonderful area at our facility, where play is encouraged, picnics allowed and memories are waiting to be made.

Close your eyes and take a mental tour with me now as I show you around. Our tour begins inside, yes inside, where you can sit in the air conditioning on those sultry summer

days and watch the finches play in their large aviary or relax by the aquarium while the fish lazily swim the day away. Our playground courtyard opens onto a large patio with comfortable furniture, a flowing fountain, and beautiful landscaping. We can meander down the sidewalk to picnic tables, or enjoy shade in the gazebo while the electric fan creates a nice summer breeze. The gazebo overlooks play areas with monkey bars, swinging bridges, slides and swings. Our elders share comical stories and tell about their grandchildren and their youthful enthusiasm when they come to visit.

We invite you to come and play in our courtyard and plan on making some memories.

David King is the Director of Maintenance at Lutheran Home—Hickory, North Carolina, and can be reached at (828) 328-2006.



At Maryfield Nursing Home in High Point, tables were examined carefully to see what made them seem institutional. In this before picture you can see a table that doesn't exactly invite the resident to an enjoyable experience. See after photo on page 2 and read story on page 4.

National Campaign to Improve Quality of Life for Nursing Home Residents and Staff

By Jennifer Wilson, MPH

As America's population ages and the first of the "baby boomers" turn 60 years old, a new coalition concerned about how we care for elderly and disabled citizens is reinvigorating efforts to improve the quality of care and quality of life for those living or recuperating in America's nursing homes. Health care providers, caregivers, medical and quality improvement experts, government agencies, consumers and others are joining the two-year *Advancing Excellence in America's Nursing Homes* campaign that will build on the success of other quality initiatives like Quality First, the Nursing Home Quality Initiative (NHQI), and the culture change movement.

The voluntary campaign, which will monitor key indicators of nursing home care quality, promotes excellence in care giving for nursing home residents and acknowledges the critical role of nursing home staff in providing that care. On September 29, 2006, nursing homes and consumers across America began voluntarily signing up to participate in the campaign by visiting the campaign Web site, www.nhqualitycampaign.org.

Advancing Excellence in America's Nursing Homes will assess progress toward achieving the following measurable goals:

1. Reducing high risk pressure ulcers;
2. Reducing the use of daily physical restraints;
3. Improving pain management for longer term nursing home

residents;

4. Improving pain management for short stay, post-acute nursing home residents;
5. Establishing individual targets for improving quality;
6. Assessing resident and family satisfaction with the quality of care;
7. Increasing staff retention; and
8. Improving consistent assignment of nursing home staff, so that residents regularly receive care from the same caregivers.

Nursing homes participating in the campaign will work on at least three of the eight goals and can access technical assistance and guidance from quality experts in reaching their targeted goals.

Consumers participating in the campaign will help to create greater awareness of quality care and the resources available now, and encourage providers to

improve the care they deliver.

The Local Area Network for Excellence (LANE) is a coalition of **Stakeholders** at the state level that comes together for the purpose of supporting providers and consumers in achieving the campaign goals. The Carolinas Center for Medical Excellence (CCME), North Carolina's Quality Improvement Organization, is the LANE Convener for North Carolina. CCME will coordinate North Carolina's participation in the Campaign.

Information Available on the Campaign Web Site

The *Advancing Excellence in America's Nursing Homes* campaign Web site includes a wealth of information for nursing homes, including detailed instructions for signing on to the campaign. See www.nhqualitycampaign.org.

Jennifer Wilson is the Project Manager for the Nursing Home Quality Initiative, a program of The Carolinas Center for Medical Excellence, formally known as MRNC, and can be reached at (919) 380-9860, x2132, (800) 682-2650, or via email at <jlwilson@ncqio.sdps.org>.



See before photo page 1. In this after photo from Maryfield Nursing Home, we see careful attention to even the smallest details. Napkins are folded in a decorative pattern which immediately suggests that this will be a special experience. There aren't any bibs and plastic mugs to remind the resident of an institutional nursing home. See story on page 4.

Snoezelen: Finding shelter from the storm

By Mary Ann Johnson

For people with Alzheimer's disease or other types of dementia, life can be stormy. Often facing demands they cannot meet and questions they cannot answer, their confusion and frustration swell into anxiety and fear.

Now at Lutheran Home—Albemarle they can find shelter from the storm.

Snoezelen (SNOO-ze-lyn), a relaxation technique originally developed for children with learning disabilities, has proven successful in reducing stress for anxious adults across the world and now in Albemarle. At the Lutheran Home they call their snoezelen room "The Sanctuary."

Inside the softly lit room, swirls of color dance across the walls while a mirrored ball spins overhead. To some it may seem more like a 70's discothèque, but to those who enter the Sanctuary it is a peaceful oasis, a break from bright lights and busy hallways.

The sanctuary is a completely new environment, one that slows a racing heart by drawing attention to patterns of light scattered about the room.

According to Albemarle Administrator Priscilla Vint and Activity Director Shirley Simons, the room is a combination of subtle diversion and gentle stimulation. A non-clinical, non-threatening, low sensory environment, the sanctuary provides an escape for those suffering from environmental overload.

"Recently we had an individual who was very anxious and prone

to wander," stated Vint. "I brought that individual into the room and almost immediately the tension level dropped." That resident became so comfortable and relaxed that sleep soon followed.

The colored images floating through the room are generated by a specially designed projector that includes a variety of mirrors, color-wheels and lenses.

Simons has also outfitted the room with comfortable rockers, soothing music, a selection of

handheld spectacles (lighted objects that draw focus and attention to the instrument), and an aroma diffuser to softly scent the air.

The word "snoezelen" is a term coined from two Dutch words "snuffelen," meaning to sniff, and "doezelen," meaning to doze or to snooze. At the Lutheran Home in Albemarle, snoezelen means rest and relief.

Mary Ann Johnson is the Director of Community Relations for the Lutheran Services for the Aging and can be reached at <mjohnson@lsanc.net>.



The Snoezelen room at the Lutheran Home features multi-sensory renovations. Above, tiny lights illuminate sheer material draped over lattice suspended from the ceiling. This provides a more subtle light than florescent tubes. Below, comfortable seating, multi-colored lighting, and soothing sounds complete the effect. The results in behavior changes can be very dramatic.



Creating Home: Pennybyrn at Maryfield

By Rob Creel and Sister Lucy Hennessy SMG

Pennybyrn at Maryfield is transforming our nursing home...*into home*. We are changing our roles, responsibilities, relationships, and renewing our spirit. As part of this transformation, we are doing renovation and construction to bring our vision into a new reality, renovating into home.

For decades, the meal tray has been the center of institutionalized food service, as it was at Maryfield... the tray line, onto the tray truck, rumbling down the hall at 7:00 am. It woke residents from a sound sleep, offered them no choice and no variety, warm but generally unappealing food.

As roles, responsibilities and relationships changed, self-led interdisciplinary teams of caregivers and residents were formed to carry out the residents' choices. We formed the breakfast team and the dining team.

The breakfast team created warm, inviting breakfast spaces and choices for all residents. Residents now eat when they choose, in their room, or in one of several welcoming breakfast areas, and order whatever they desire for breakfast: eggs (any style), pancakes, grits, sausage, bacon, and all the traditional choices. Every day from 7:30 to 9:30 am, breakfasts are cooked to order, just the way you like breakfast at home. Residents are assisted by the traditional nursing and dietary staff, but the residents' lives are especially enriched by the role of the housekeepers in dining. Trained as dining assistants and hostesses, that very special relationship between a resident and their housekeeper now extends to breakfast as well. All staff actively

assisting residents in the dining areas are invited to join the resident in the meal, *like at home*.

With the assistance of the Enhancement Grant, the dining team more recently worked to further enhance the dining experience at Maryfield. They assisted a group of residents in selecting their new tableware, glassware to replace the traditional plastic, china to replace the traditional melamine, and cloth napkins to replace the traditional paper, *like at home*. One member of the team related, "We had a learning circle and passed around various sample glasses, discussing the resident likes and dislikes on everything from ease of holding to amount of beverage the glass would hold. Then we filled each one with water to judge the weight. One resident tried each glass of water to see if it contained his beverage of choice (a clear liquid often associated with Russian origins). None did, but he made his choice known anyway, making everyone aware that he would like the glass even more if the beverage were of his choice."

Behind the "dietary department only, hairnet protected area" of the main kitchen, our dining services department is now cooking from scratch, *like at home*. In the words of our dining services mentor: "It took about a year, but things have really changed. It was a great day to see a cook peeling potatoes, and another making marinara sauce. Through some attrition and a lot of stepping up, we now cook everything from scratch. All of our cooks are formally trained, or are in school. They take pride in their work and enjoy meeting resident needs. Why? By making our food from scratch, it enables us to give our residents true choice. I remember when Mr. W came to Maryfield. Our kitchen manager, Mark, noticed that he was not eating. We talked to him, and got him to drink a homemade banana milkshake. Then we learned

he does not like cheese, and that he loves hamburgers. So Mark started making him a half-pound hamburger, and Mr. W ate the whole burger. Before cooking from scratch, we could have only offered a preformed three ounce burger. Another resident, Mrs. T, spoke out and said she wanted to have breakfast items for dinner. We assured her that we always have breakfast items available and she could request them at any time. Now, about once a week, she orders two eggs over easy, toast, bacon and sometimes a pancake. The cooks make it to order. I must admit at first they didn't see all the benefit of cooking special items for the resident, but once they started hearing compliments rather than complaints they were "sold". Mrs. T lets everyone know they can order special things, and her whole table will often order breakfast. It is easy to cook, and well worth the effort as she never complains about our food any more."

While we wait for the physical plant renovations to catch up with staff and resident personal transformation, our renewed spirits are leading a team of household coordinators and dietary managers to the next phase of enhancing dining at Maryfield, maximizing choice for our residents at lunch and supper within our physical plant limitations of today. By mid-November, all residents will enjoy true choice, at point of service, choice of beverages, breads, salads, desserts, entrees and alternatives to traditional entrée offerings. These will be waited to their table or their room, served from decentralized dining rooms complete with steam table service, assisted by a growing team of dining assistants who can enhance the fellowship at nourishing meals. All residents will be honored with the dignity of point-of-service choice, sharing with their friends, *like at home*.

Rob Creel is the Director of Dining Services and Sister Lucy Hennessy is the Administrator at Pennybyrn at Maryfield, High Point, North Carolina. They can be reached at (336) 886-2444.

COW

By Beth Pate, NHA

The residents at Woodlands Assisted Living and Rehabilitation Center in Fayetteville, North Carolina have an interesting new pet roaming the hallways. It has been creating some lively commotion in therapy and has basically been staying under everyone's fingers. It's the residents' new cow! A cow by any other name would certainly be suspect in long-term care, but this "cow" is the residents' own "computer on wheels." Everyday the residents refer to their laptop as the "calf". Residents milk the cow and even send the cow out to pasture or shut it down.

Of course, "cow" is not the given name for this new innovative software for seniors, but it's one that works at Woodlands. Woodlands, along with the other Century Care facilities in North Carolina, introduced this latest computer technology to their residents in the latter part of the summer. The software allows staff and family members the opportunity to reconnect with the residents on a meaningful level. It also empowers the residents to take advantage of all of the benefits this new computer can offer. Will Swinson, a resident from Woodlands, says the system, "gives you the opportunity to improve yourself, exercising your mind, and lets you improve your self-confidence." Will loves sports and is often seen browsing the Cable News Network and Sports Illustrated, one of his favorite web-sites.

The computer is stationed in the activity room, is internet accessible, and is able to be wheeled from room to room for individual use. The computer is also used for large group activities on the big screen. Oftentimes, the game shows of "Wheel of Fortune" or "Jeopardy" are out pacing bingo in popularity. The hardware is specifically designed to accommodate individuals

with a wide variety of needs to enhance their quality of life. The computer features a large, touch screen with a moveable arm for easy access to wheelchairs or beds. The system comes with a traditional keyboard as well as an adaptive keyboard with large letters that can be changed out to best fit the resident's needs. The mouse has a trackball and a bright red sticker cueing the resident to right click.

The therapy department often uses the simulator cycle, which is a regular stationary bike that is connected to interactive software where a resident envisions himself racing through the mountains. Annette Webster, program manager for the therapy department, claims she has definitely seen an increase in the stamina in many of the residents she treats because of the interactive capabilities. Occupational therapy takes advantage of the touch screen puzzles to re-train residents how to use a microwave or automated teller machine while speech therapy uses the word games and puzzles to expand cognition and development.

The new software has generated a new sense of excitement in the residents and staff at Woodlands. Raz Camp, a medication tech, was overjoyed to be able to offer new diversionary activities to a resident who wanders. She was amazed to discover that the resident could learn how to use the mouse while using the mouse trainer program and be able to complete a touch screen puzzle. Oftentimes, we assume that a resident who has a cognitive deficit will not be able to participate in many activities, but with this new software we have been proven wrong.

The introduction of the software has not come without its challenges. We have faced some resistance to change and the fear of something new with many of our residents. One nursing assistant came into my office one afternoon, with disappointment all over her face after

working with one of the residents, claiming, "she won't let me work with her on the computer, she says she worked on a computer all of her life at Roses and she's not going to work on one here!" It was all I could do not to laugh, but I explained to the aide that we may have to try another approach. We must first find something that she is interested in, like soap operas or gardening, and introduce her to the wealth of knowledge available to her at the click of a button! We're not going to put her to work.

Overall, the residents and staff have enjoyed coming together while sharing a common interest. The families have enjoyed staying in contact with their loved ones, some of whom are stationed in Iraq, and the residents will never get enough of seeing those pictures of the grandkids. We're all learning together and using this new found creativity inspired by our new pet "cow."

Beth Pate is the Administrator for Woodlands Assisted Living and Rehabilitation Center in Fayetteville, NC and can be contacted by email at <beth.pate@woodlandsassistedliving.info>.



Facilities are learning that computers can be used in areas other than offices. At the Woodlands, Will Swinson is a regular user of the COW, short for Computer on Wheels.

THE NORTH CAROLINA COALITION FOR LONG-TERM CARE ENHANCEMENT

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To contact the Coalition, please email us at alice@ltcenhance.com.



*Enhancing the lives of residents and staff in
North Carolina's long-term care settings*

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www.ltcenhance.com

The North Carolina Coalition for
Long-Term Care Enhancement
2711 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, North Carolina
27699-2711



Colorful lights, bubbling fountains, sounds of nature and soft textures combine to create the Snoezelen effect. Read on page 3 how The Lutheran Home - Albemarle has created a room that helps de-stress residents and ease behavior concerns. As always, please share this newsletter with all staff. If you want to view this newsletter in color, you can find a link on our web site. The address is "www.ltcenhance.com".



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